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Palgrave, R. H. I. (Ed.). *Dictionary of Political Economy*. 3 vols. Pp. lii, 2529. Price, \$15.00. New York: Macmillan Company, 1910.

All three volumes of Palgrave's *Dictionary of Political Economy*, were reprinted, with corrections, in 1910. The changes in the main body of the work have been confined to minor detail without alteration of paragraphing or paging. The dictionary was, however, brought down to date in 1908, by an appendix to volume three which contains brief articles supplementary to the papers contained in the volumes as formerly published, and which discuss topics that have become important during recent years.

The editor says in his introduction to the preface that "At no period of the history of the world has applied science done more to assist industry, to facilitate the means of communication, and to promote the development of business than during recent years." The changes in economic activity and thought, the growth of government regulation of, and interference with, commerce and industry, the establishment and activity of the Hague Tribunal, the progress of labor organization, these and many other questions of first-rate importance are appropriately discussed in the appendix to volume three.

Such a work as Palgrave's *Dictionary of Political Economy*, is an indispensable reference book for all students of economics, American as well as English. It is an essential part of any well-equipped public or private library. However, the work is mainly, though not exclusively, the creation of English scholarship, and the point of view in most parts of the volumes is English. It is probably impossible for an English or German encyclopedia to lay such emphasis upon American topics as to make the treatment entirely satisfactory to American students. Likewise, it is not to be expected that American scholars can produce a work that will meet all the needs of foreign students. Palgrave's volumes are of the highest rank, but there is still need of a similar dictionary by American scholars. A *Cyclopedia of American Government*, is now being written under the general editorship of Professor Albert Bushnell Hart of Harvard University and Professor Andrew C. McLaughlin of the University of Chicago. This American work, together with Palgrave's *Dictionary of Political Economy*, and Conrad's *Handwoerterbuch*, will give students of economics and government comprehensive and authoritative reference works.

EMORY R. JOHNSON.

Quaife, Milo M. (Editor and annotated by). *The Diary of James K. Polk During His Presidency, 1845-1849*. 4 vols. Pp. xxxii, 1962. Price, \$20.00.

Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1910.

The publication of the diary kept by President Polk during the greater part of his administration is a notable event, as it is a historical document of great importance. Probably no other President has been more misunderstood, adversely criticised, and even maligned, than President Polk. To be sure, several historians within recent years, notably the late Professors Bourne and Garrison, as also Dr. Schouler and Professor McMaster, have had access to the diary in its manuscript form and they have done much

to correct that former view of Polk's character which found expression in the name frequently given to him of "Polk, the mendacious." "It is not unlikely, however, that these printed pages," to quote from the opinion expressed by Professor A. C. McLaughlin in his appreciative introduction, "will bring in a new and juster estimate of Polk himself and a fairer view of the four years which, judged by results, are second in importance to few periods in our history."

The diary owed its origin, as Polk records, to "a very important conversation" which took place on August 26, 1845, in a Cabinet meeting, between himself and Buchanan, on the Oregon Question. "This conversation," writes Polk, in the cold matter of fact style, that characterizes all his entries, "was of so important a character that I deemed it proper on the same evening to reduce the substance of it to writing for the purpose of retaining it more distinctly in my memory. . . . It was this circumstance which first suggested to me the idea, if not the necessity of keeping a journal or diary of events and transactions which might occur during my Presidency" (II, 101). From this time on throughout the remainder of his administration and, indeed, until June 2, 1849, only two weeks before his death, he with great fidelity and conscientiousness adhered to his resolve and chronicled the events of the day, oftentimes at considerable inconvenience. There is no evidence that Polk kept the diary with any expectation of its future publication, although there are here and there indications that he may have had in mind the possibility of making use of it in the preparation of an autobiography, or historical review of his administration. Thus he writes on one occasion, "If God grants me length of days and health, I will, after the expiration of my term, give a history of the selfish and corrupt considerations which influence the course of public men, as a legacy to posterity" (II, 329). His early death prevented any such intentions from being carried out, if they were seriously entertained. Mrs. Polk, however, desired some friend of her husband to make use of this voluminous record and other papers, to prepare a history of Polk's administration, but her wishes were not carried out. In 1901 the Chicago Historical Society purchased the manuscript of the diary, which up to that time had been in the possession of the Polk family, and it is due to this Society that the diary is now presented to the public more than sixty years after the events that it records occurred.

No other President, save John Quincy Adams, has left so full and minute a record of his administration. In its pages are presented with great fulness the proceedings of the Cabinet. In the most direct and matter of fact way Polk records the views he had expressed on all the important questions of the day, such as the annexation of Texas, the settlement of the Oregon boundary, the war with Mexico and the resulting acquisition of California and the great Southwest, the struggle over slavery in the territories which, with the introduction of the Wilmot Proviso, entered upon a new and more acute stage. Many of these entries throw such new light on the views of Polk that they will correct many misconceptions, and will necessitate a reconsideration of the judgments that had been passed upon

his acts. As Professor McLaughlin declares, "We are likely to form a more charitable estimate of his dealing with Mexico and England, and to acquit him of any pusillanimous bluster and surrender to England while engaged in imperiously giving intentional affront to Mexico" (I, xiv). The diary shows that in the case of Oregon he stood out courageously in the face of the opposition of Buchanan, his Secretary of State, and the southern wing of his party, for a firm policy towards Great Britain even at the risk of war. Although he did not secure the extreme demands of the democratic platform, he forced Great Britain to offer the very terms that she had previously rejected. Again these pages show that while Polk was an expansionist and desired to extend the boundaries of the United States to the southwest, they acquit him of the charge that he made war on Mexico in the interests of slavery extension. Later he even successfully opposed the proposal for the annexation of "all of Mexico" against a strong section of his party.

That he was a nationalist is apparent from numerous comments on the slavery question. Not only did he condemn the Wilmot Proviso as "mischievous and wicked," but on the other hand he was equally emphatic in his condemnation of the course of Calhoun and the Southern members of Congress. He writes "I feared that there were a few Southern men who had become so excited that they were indifferent to the preservation of the Union. I stated that I put my face alike against Southern agitators & Northern fanatics & should do everything in my power to allay excitement by adjusting the question of slavery and preserving the Union" (IV, 299).

No civil service reformer could be more severe in his condemnation of the professional office seeker than Polk. His diary fairly bristles with the invectives he hurls against the "herd of lazy loafers" and "patriots" who continually harassed him during the whole of his administration. From the numerous quotable passages relating to this subject, the following must suffice: "The people of the U. S. have no idea of the extent to which the President's time, which ought to be devoted to more important matters, is occupied by the voracious and often unprincipled persons who seek office. . . . It requires great patience & full command to repress the loathing I feel towards a hungry crowd of office hunters who often crowd my office" (III, 410). Repeatedly, he declares, "I most sincerely wish that I had no offices to bestow" (I, 261, 446; II, 105).

Polk committed to the confidence of his diary the most unsparing criticism of his contemporaries. He draws a most unpleasant portrait of Buchanan. While recognizing his ability, he regarded him as selfish, insincere, inconsistent and capricious. He was the one member of his Cabinet that caused him the greatest embarrassment. "All his acts and opinions," he writes, "seem to have been controlled with a view to his own advancement, so much so that I can have no confidence or reliance in any advice that he may give upon public questions" (III, 403). Of Calhoun's character also he formed a very poor opinion, believing that he "had become perfectly desperate in his aspirations to the Presidency, and had seized upon the sec-

tional question as the only means of sustaining himself in his present fallen condition. . . . He is wholly selfish & I am satisfied has no patriotism" (II, 457-9). From passages of similar frankness, we gain not only Polk's estimate of the character and purposes of his associates, but also a conviction of his own love of the Union and his condemnation of self-seeking and partnership that placed devotion to party above principle.

Indeed, not only does the diary present Polk in a new light as a statesman, but it also increases our respect for him as a man. Although he appears narrow, cold some times, indeed, prejudiced and inclined to place a low estimate upon the motives of men in general, nevertheless he is revealed as possessing a large measure of good judgment, decision, firmness and courage, as well as directness and perseverance, a man of force, who dominated his Cabinet and successfully carried to conclusion all of the measures he had determined upon at the opening of his administration.

The editor has taken few liberties with the text, beyond leaving out repetitions, supplying in brackets obvious omissions, and modernizing the punctuation. Professor Quaife contributes a short biographical sketch of Polk and some brief and helpful notes, which might have been multiplied and extended to advantage. The one adverse criticism upon the editor's work relates to the index, which is far from complete. Several excellent reproductions of portraits of Polk are given, and the press work is all that could be desired.

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Rowntree, B. S. *Land and Labour: Lessons from Belgium.* Pp. xx, 633.

Price, \$3.50. New York: Macmillan Company, 1910.

Mr. Rowntree was led by his study of poverty in England to investigate the connection between social conditions and the system of land tenure in various European countries. But as this task soon proved too vast, he limited himself to the single country of Belgium, and the present volume is the result. The study is, therefore, a sociological, quite as much as a purely industrial or agricultural one; for the questions ever present in the mind of the author were apparently "why did this come to be?" and "how can it be remedied?" The volume is divided into six parts, of which the first deals with the social and economic conditions of Belgium; the second considers the industrial life; the third the agricultural; the fourth the factors of education, transportation, and taxation; the fifth, which is the longest, discusses the standard of life, including such problems as co-operation, intemperance, housing, pauperism, unemployment, etc. The last part presents the author's conclusions.

A mere summary of the contents cannot give a fair idea of the comprehensive scope of the work or of the labor involved in its preparation. The author states that it is the result of "four years' close study." There were no census reports from which data could be secured, and in some cases, especially in the investigation of land ownership, mortgages, etc.,